

Message Text

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44

ACTION EB-07

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, SP

SUBJ: GOS OFFICIALS' COMMENTS ON BILATERAL TRADE WITH U.S.

1. FOLLIWING THE FUND AND BANK MEETINGS AND THEIR DISCUSSIONS WITH USG OFFICIALS, BOTH MINISTER OF FINANCE CABELLO DE ALBA AND MINISTER OF COMMERCE CERON MADE PUBLIC STATEMENTS CONCERNING THE SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH THEY VIEW THE CONTINUED IMBALANCE IN SPAIN'S TRADE WITH THE U.S.

2. ADDRESSING THE SPANISH-AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, CABELLO DE ALBA, ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS HERE, ALLUDED TO RESTRICTIONS ON THE ENTRY OF SPANISH GOODS INTO THE U.S. AND SPAIN'S DIFFICULTY IN OBTAINING GSP TREATMENT UNDER THE TRADE ACT OF 1974. HE SAID THAT THESE FACTORS ADVERSELY AFFECT SPAIN'S EXPORTS "BUT COULD ALSO AFFECT OUR IMPORT POLICY." HE NOTED THAT "THERE ALSO EXISTS IN SPAIN STRONG PROTECTIONIST INTERESTS THAT PRESS THEIR DEMANDS FOR RESTRICTIONS USING AS A PRETEXT THE TREATMENT ACCORDED SPANISH PRODUCTS IN OTHER MARKETS."

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3. CERON TOLD THE PRESS AT THE MADRID AIRPORT THAT HE

HAD DISCUSSED SPAIN'S CONCERN OVER THE BILATERAL TRADE SITUATION AND THE VARIOUS U.S. MEASURES WHICH SPAIN FELT HURT HER EXPORT PROSPECTS IN THE U.S. MARKET WITH OFFICIALS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE. HE SAID THAT HE HAD FOUND U.S. OFFICIALS "RECEPTIVE" AND HAD EXPRESSED HIS GRAVE CONCERN OVER THE SITUATION AS WELL AS NOTING THAT "IT IS EVIDENT THAT WE COULD NOT CONTINUE TO SUPPORT A GROWING DEFICIT, PARTICULARLY WHEN IT WAS THE RESULT OF MEASURES IMPOSED BY THE UNITED STATES THAT REDUCED SPANISH EXPORTS."

4. COMMENT: THESE ARE THE STRONGEST STATEMENTS THAT WE HAVE SEEN ON THIS SUBJECT BY SENIOR GOS OFFICIALS. IT IS ALSO THE FIRST TIME THAT SUCH OFFICIALS HAVE PUBLICALLY HINTED AT THE POSSIBILITY OF SPANISH IMPORT RESTRICTIONS AGAINST U.S. GOODS. CABELLO DE ALBA AND CERON ARE THE TWO MOST INFLUENTIAL GOS CABINET OFFICIALS ON TRADE QUESTIONS.
EATON

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